construction of three Pollution Control Vessels on M/s. ABG Shipyard, Surat. The vessels are at different stages of construction. The first of the three vessels is likely to be delivered by March 2007.

(b) A total of 14 ships sank in Indian waters from May, 2003 to April, 2006. During this period, there were six incidents resulting into spillage of 733 tonnes of oil in Indian waters. These incidents were effectively monitored and contained by the Coast Guard.

(c) and (d) Director General (DG), Shipping, has issued appropriate guidelines/circulars regarding oil tankers so as to prevent our seas from pollution. DG, Shipping, has also issued circular for enforcing International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations. Single hull oil tankers being crude oil tanker of 20,000 deadweight tones and above, and oil product carriers of 30,000 deadweight tones and above, having no segregated ballast tanks in protective locations (SBT/PL) and which are the most vulnerable oil tankers, have all been phased out by 2005. Similarly, single hull tankers of the above size but equipped with SBT/PL and single hull oil tankers being crude oil tankers below 20,000 deadweight tones and oil product carriers below 30,000 deadweight tones but above 5000 deadweight tones, delivered before January, 1978 were also phased out by 2005. No violation of the guidelines issued regarding the above types of tankers has been reported.

Government of India have also formed a committee to review the long term policy on oil spill management that involves action at inter-ministerial level. Indian Coast Guard has been nominated as the nodal agency for combating oil pollution and Central Coordinating Authority for National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan.

Denial of cell phone facility in border areas

3398. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the people in the international border areas are being deprived of the provision of cell phones on defence grounds;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these people are suffering a lot for want of cell phone even in the matter of law and order; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take in order to overcome this barrier?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) to (c) Due to security considerations, Cellular Mobile Service Licence Agreement, *inter alia,* provides that the licensee shall create a buffer zone of 10 Kms. Width along the Indian-International border, if any, where no services would be permitted. This stipulation has been incorporated with a view to restricting the spill over of cellular mobile signals beyond the international border, so that they cannot be misused for trans-border operations by terrorists, smugglers and other anti-national elements. However, these services have been permitted at a few places on an experimental basis to see whether the requisite technique to stop the signals from crossing over the international border is effective and stable on the ground.

Withdrawal of troops from Siachen

†3399. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to withdraw troops from Siachen;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the decision of withdrawing Army from Siachen are being taken under the foreign pressure; and

(d) precautionary steps being taken to face the situation arising out of the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (d) A ceasefire has been in force on Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Siachen area since the midnight of 25th November, 2003. There is no decision at present to pull out troops from Siachen Glacier.

Investigations into communal riots at Mau (U.P.)

3400. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.